

Swashbuckler's Son Side-Steps

Debonair Doug Fairbanks Royalty-Aimed Queries

DAPPER and still-dashing Douglas Fairbanks Jr.—who has enough diplomatic savoir faire to hold the title of Social Consultant at the U. S. Embassy in London—was smilingly side-stepping all questions about the British Royal family here last night.

The former stage and screen idol, an American who has been living in London in recent years, rates so highly in court circles that Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip have dined quietly with the Fairbankses at home. But any tid-bits of intimate gossip he may have heard around Buckingham Palace were being kept to himself during a three-day stay in Washington.

Surrounded at one point yesterday in a mob scene of probably 200 autograph-seekers, the suave Fairbanks turned a deaf ear to a reporter's queries about romantic prospects in Princess Margaret's future. Uttered without the bat of an eye, but prefaced with an engaging grin, his answer to the question was: "I consider New York my real home."

WHAT is the queen like when she drops by to take potluck with close cronies?

Fairbanks grabbed a waiting paper and pen, squinted as he wrote, and declared: "My handwriting is getting to look like hieroglyphics."

Everywhere the actor-turned-producer went yesterday, he was surrounded by usually-biased Washingtonians who wanted to reminisce about his father, the swashbuckling Douglas Fairbanks Sr.

"He was the Rock Hudson of my day," one little old lady recalled.

PRESIDING over the pro-

gram was District of Columbia Chapter chairman, Charles S. Dewey. Brig. Gen. Frank A. Tobey, Deputy Chief of Army Chaplains, gave the invocation. Others on the program included Mrs. Robert White-law Wilson, National Director of the Office of Volunteers; Mrs. Francis E. Hildebrand, chairman of the Office of Volunteers; Mrs. David E. Finley, chairman of the Awards and Recognition Committee and Fairbanks' hostess during his stay here, and Mrs. G. Morton Rossee, vice chairman.

Organizations singled out for recognition ranged from Arena Stage to a group called the "All Fouled Up Pup Tent No. 5" of the Military Order of the Coöties. Years of service ranged from the minimal five to 40 and over.

The three honored for four decades of work were the Washington American League Baseball Club, Inc., Daughters of the American Revolution (through the combined efforts of 60 D. C. Chapters) and the National Jewish Welfare Board, Washington Armed Services Committee.

THE DEBONAIR Fairbanks came to the recognition ceremonies from a party in his honor at the American Newspaper Women's Club. Standing with Club President Mary Haworth to receive the several hundred guests, Fairbanks seemed to be having a gay time.

"Every fifth person said she knew my father," he said.

"That certainly dates the members of this club," commented Mary.

Stopping to chat with Fairbanks were former Ambassador and Mrs. Myron Cowen. Fairbanks visited

the Cowens in Brussels when Cowen was Ambassador to Belgium.

Mr. and Mrs. David Finley—Fairbanks' hosts for his Washington visit—came by, as did an old-time friend, Mrs. Richard Simpson, wife of Representative Simpson of Pennsylvania.

Among the club's associate members who took their turns pouring coffee were Mrs. Merriweather Post—in a bouffant print dress with lilac and rose-flowered chapeau—Mrs. Perle Mesta who wore a black, fox trimmed Marusia ensemble; and Mrs. Harold Burton, her black velvet hat a conversation piece.

Mrs. Ernest Eden Norris who knew Fairbanks when he "was a little boy" was there. Mrs. Martin Vogel—she knew the honor guest's father—was with Mrs. Effingham Townsend.

The party even had party crashers—a young man and woman who came seeking autographs.

Others seen in the crowd were Mrs. Maxwell Rabb, Gen. and Mrs. Wade Haislip, former Senator Claude Pepper, Mrs. Charles P. Cabell, and Rear Adm. and Mrs. Thomas Kelly.

Co-chairmen of the party were Mrs. Eric Johnston and Mrs. Alice Curran.